

County of Loudoun
Department of Planning
MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 18, 2008

TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
Land Use Review

FROM: Joe Gorney, AICP, Senior Planner JCG
Community Planning

SUBJECT: SPEX 2008-0042, The Compass School – Ashbrook – 2nd Referral

BACKGROUND

Childcare Holdings of Ashburn, LLC, proposes a Special Exception to allow a 13,168 square-foot childcare center with associated parking and play area in the Planned Development-Industrial Park (PD-IP) Zoning District on an approximately 2.19-acre lot. The property is part of the Ashbrook development (ZMAP 1994-0012), which was approved on March 20, 1996 and included a childcare center in this general location, subject to a future Special Exception application. The application would amend the footprint of a childcare center approved in SPEX 2005-0005 (Busy Kids Learning Center - Ashbrook), which allowed a 9,960 square-foot childcare center. The site is southeast of the intersection of Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive. The property lies within the Airport Impact Overlay District (AI) LDN 60 1-mile buffer.

As part of the Second Submittal, the applicant also requests a Minor Special Exception to modify the requirement for 10 additional parking spaces for pick-up and drop-off.

The applicant has responded to staff comments, dated September 16, 2008, and addressed issues related to land use, signs and lighting, and efficiency. Outstanding issues are discussed below.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The subject property is governed under the policies of the Revised General Plan. The property is located within the Ashburn Community of the Suburban Policy Area, and is designated as a Business area (Revised General Plan, Planned Land Use Map, p. 7-23). The policies of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (BPMMP), the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Countywide Retail Plan (Retail Plan) also apply.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

Building Placement and Design

Staff previously recommended that the applicant commit to various building placement and design practices, as specified in the Revised General Plan and the Retail Plan, such as:

- Design buildings with a unity of design through the use of similar elements, such as rooflines, materials, window arrangement, sign location, and architectural details;
- Include usable outdoor spaces and amenities for employees and children, such as shaded benches and picnic tables;
- Incorporate building recesses, off-sets, angular forms, or other features;
- Consider distinctive roof forms; and,
- Incorporate weather protection over the front walkway.

In response, the applicant submitted an illustrative elevation and a photograph as an indication of the proposed design of the building and “believes that the proposed building is compatible in location, size, and design with surrounding buildings and will complement properties in Ashbrook” (Response to First Referral Comments, p. 2). The applicant also proposes a minimum of three benches in the 15,000 square feet of usable outdoor space. While the applicant is not proposing weather protection over the front walkway, the building is to include a covered foyer, which could be used as a waiting area.

Staff appreciates the inclusion of these design practices into the development and recommends that the applicant commit to them.

The applicant, as part of the Second Submittal, also requests a Minor Special Exception to modify the requirement for 10 additional parking spaces for pick-up and drop-off. The application includes a total of 73 parking spaces, which is consistent with the First Submittal. Both the First and Second Submittals have been evaluated based on 73 spaces. The current design addresses compatibility issues with the neighboring residential uses. Additional parking spaces would engender design changes and necessitate a reexamination of compatibility with the adjacent uses, stormwater runoff, landscaping, and buffering.

Staff defers to Zoning Administration regarding the modification to the requirement for pick-up and drop-off spaces. If the number of parking spaces is increased, staff requests the opportunity to evaluate the new submittal. Staff recommends that any additional parking spaces be permeable to minimize the increase in stormwater runoff.

Wetlands

In the First Referral, staff recommended that the applicant modify the project so that the functionality of the on-site and off-site wetlands is preserved. Staff requested additional information regarding proposed changes to the site hydrology so that any impacts could be evaluated. For any impacts to on-site resources, staff recommended mitigation on-site, within the same watershed, and within Loudoun County. Staff also requested

information regarding the Finished Floor Elevation (FFE) of the proposed building so that the relationship of the proposed use to the remaining wetlands and the surrounding properties could be evaluated.

The applicant responded that a State permit has already been issued for the property, which allows the depicted impacts to the on-site palustrine forested wetlands. Wetlands mitigation is planned in Fauquier and Prince William Counties at the Cedar Run Wetlands Bank at a mitigation-to-loss ratio of 4:1.

The applicant did not provide information regarding the expected FFE of the proposed building.

Drainage currently flows from a pipe at the northern end of the site at an elevation of approximately 264 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL), through the property, and off-site into another pipe at approximately 258 feet MSL. The wetlands generally range from 263 to 258 feet MSL.

The plat shows that the remaining wetlands preservation area would be approximately 15 feet from the proposed building. Without information regarding the elevation change from the proposed building to the drainage channel and wetlands, it remains unclear how the integrity and functionality of the meandering channel and the neighboring properties would be addressed. If the project is built as proposed and the drainage channel is eliminated in part, reconstructed with a narrower cross-section, or piped underground, scouring or other impacts to the remaining wetlands and neighboring properties might occur.

The impact of the proposed uses on the drainage channel, the remaining wetlands, and the neighboring properties is unclear, largely due to a lack of information regarding the proposed elevations of the proposed uses. Staff reiterates recommendations from the First Referral that the applicant provide additional information regarding proposed elevations and changes to the site hydrology so that any impacts can be evaluated. Staff recommends that the applicant modify the project so that impacts to the remaining wetlands, channel, and neighboring properties are avoided and so that the functionality of the remaining on-site and off-site wetlands is preserved.

Landscaping and Buffering

In the First Referral, staff recommended that the applicant commit to a landscape plan and provide grading and planting information to help determine whether the landscaping and buffering is adequate to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses, to justify the reduction in setbacks, and to assess the visual impact of the project. Staff recommended elevations and plantings that screen parking and soften views from the adjacent residences.

In response, the applicant submitted an illustrative landscape plan, with a general depiction of trees and shrubs. The plat also includes a 6-foot high opaque fence surrounding the play area with landscape materials on the outside of the fence.

Staff recommends that the applicant meet with the County Forester to review the plant materials, landscaping plan, and planting details. Staff also recommends that the applicant select plant species indigenous to the Virginia Piedmont region and commit to the landscaping plan.

Stormwater Management

In previous comments, staff recommended that the applicant install Low Impact Development facilities on-site, such as permeable pavers, porous concrete, cisterns, planted swales, curb cuts, rain gardens, and bioretention filters adjacent to impervious areas, to promote infiltration on-site, minimize peak storm flows, and help filter non-point source pollutants. Staff also recommended that pipe installation be minimized. Staff noted that the previous approval for SPEX 2005-0007 included a commitment to pervious parking for all perimeter parking and on-site water quality treatment.

In response, the applicant has revised the plat to include permeable paving for 44 of the 72 parking spaces (61%).

Staff appreciates the inclusion of permeable paving in the project and recommends that the applicant commit to the installation and maintenance of the permeable paving.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Circulation

In the First Referral, staff recommended that the applicant commit to the installation of pedestrian connections to the existing sidewalk along Navajo Drive, crossing facilities across the driveway, and crossing facilities to the commercial area on the north side of Russell Branch Parkway.

The applicant responded by including these facilities on the proposed plat.

Staff appreciates the inclusion of these facilities in the project design. To ensure access in all directions to the local sidewalk network, staff recommends that sidewalks be constructed on both sides of the driveway and that the applicant commit to the installation of the depicted bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff is supportive of the Special Exception provided that the issues raised above are addressed. Staff is available to meet with the applicant to discuss these issues.

Cc: Julie Pastor, AICP, Planning Director
Cindy Keegan, AICP, Program Manager, Community Planning (via email)

County of Loudoun
Department of Planning
MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 16, 2008

TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
Land Use Review

FROM: Joe Gorney, AICP, Senior Planner *YGA*
Community Planning

SUBJECT: SPEX 2008-0042, The Compass School - Ashbrook

BACKGROUND

Childcare Holdings of Ashburn, LLC, proposes a Special Exception to allow a 13,168 square-foot childcare center with associated parking and play area in the Planned Development-Industrial Park (PD-IP) Zoning District on an approximately 2.19-acre lot. The property is part of the Ashbrook development (ZMAP 1994-0012), which was approved on March 20, 1996 and included a childcare center in this general location, subject to a future Special Exception application. The application would amend the footprint of a childcare center approved in SPEX 2005-0005 (Busy Kids Learning Center - Ashbrook), which allowed a 9,960 square-foot childcare center. The site is southeast of the intersection of Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive. The property lies within the Airport Impact Overlay District (AI) LDN 60 1-mile buffer.



Vicinity Map



Existing Conditions (Sept. 11, 2008)

The lot is surrounded by commercial uses to the north (across Russell Branch Parkway) and single-family detached housing/Ashbrook Homeowners Association (HOA) Property

to the west, south, and east. The site contains wetlands resources. Stormwater structures are located near the north and south sides of the lot.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The subject property is governed under the policies of the Revised General Plan. The property is located within the Ashburn Community of the Suburban Policy Area, and is designated as a Business area (Revised General Plan, Planned Land Use Map, p. 7-23). The policies of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan (BPMMP), the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Countywide Retail Plan (Retail Plan) also apply.

ANALYSIS LAND USE

The proposed childcare center is considered a service use. Services are a secondary land use in the Business Community (Revised General Plan, text, p. G-10). For larger projects "[t]he County encourages a mix of uses in most of its office and light-industrial business developments" (Revised General Plan, text, p. 6-20). The land use mix, as a percentage of the land area, in Regional Office communities will generally comply with the following ratios:

Land Use Category	Minimum Required	Maximum Permitted
High Density Residential	15%	25%
Regional Office	50%	70%
Commercial Retail and Services*	0%	10%
Light Industrial/Flex	0%	20%
Overall Commercial & Light Industrial	0%	20%
Public & Civic	5%	No maximum
Public Parks & Open Space	10%	No maximum

* Retail Policy Guidance provided in Countywide Retail Plan (Revised General Plan, Policy 5, p. 6-29)

For properties less than 50 acres, such as the proposed site, the Revised General Plan recognizes that the land use mix may not be achievable. In those cases, the applicant may vary from the land use mix by showing that an alternative is more appropriate for the specific site. This can be accomplished by providing the County with a survey of land uses within a 1,500-foot radius of the site (Revised General Plan, Policy 8, p. 6-7).

A review of County records indicates a mix of uses within a 1,500 foot radius of the property, including office, commercial, residential, and open space. The following pictures depict several of the surrounding buildings:



Commercial Uses North of Russell Branch Parkway (Sept. 11, 2008)



Adjacent Residential Uses (Sept. 11, 2008)

Staff recommends that the applicant provide a detailed inventory of the uses, including retail and service uses, within a 1,500-foot radius of the proposed childcare center. The applicant should also explain how the proposed use will serve the Business Community.

SITE DESIGN

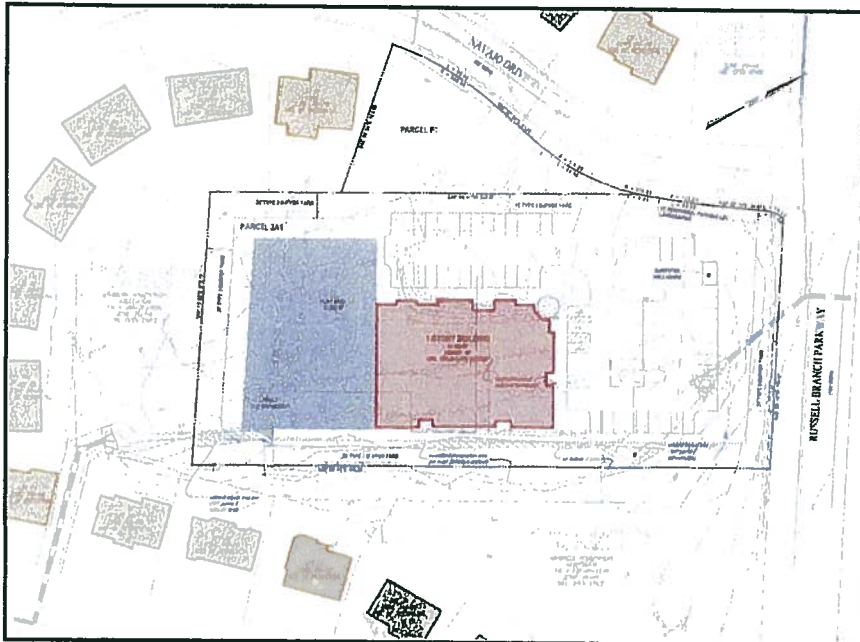
Design issues include building placement and design, landscaping and buffering, stormwater management, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, and signs and lighting. Design guidelines are included in the County's Revised General Plan and Retail Plan and are intended to emphasize the development of uses that accommodate the customer, the business, and the adjoining land uses (Retail Plan, text, p. 19).

Building Placement and Design

Regional Office developments will emulate the key traditional design concepts of the Revised General Plan by addressing the design and function of exterior spaces, pedestrian access from adjoining residential areas, architectural cohesiveness, and environmental conservation. To frame and define the street space, buildings should face each other across the street with minimal setbacks. Spatial definition should be reinforced with the regular planting of street trees chosen to develop an overhead leaf canopy. Parking should not be located at the front of buildings (Revised General Plan, text, pp. 11-14 – 11-15).

The Retail Plan provides further guidance including:

- Design buildings with a unity of design through the use of similar elements, such as rooflines, materials, window arrangement, sign location, and architectural details;
- Include usable outdoor spaces;
- Incorporate building recesses, off-sets, angular forms, or other features;
- Consider distinctive roof forms; and
- Incorporate weather protection over the front walkway (Retail Plan, Design Guidelines, p. 20).



Proposed Plat

The applicant has placed the building in the central portion of the site, with the play area toward the rear and the majority of parking adjacent to Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive. The applicant has also submitted a building illustrative, depicting a single-story building. The plat specifies a maximum proposed height of 40 feet.

Staff recommends that the applicant commit to a building placement and design that addresses the issues raised in the Revised General Plan and Retail Plan to include:

- **Rooflines, materials, window arrangement, sign location, and architectural details compatible with the surrounding buildings;**
- **Usable outdoor spaces and amenities for employees and children, such as shaded benches and picnic tables;**
- **Building recesses, off-sets, angular forms, or other features;**
- **Distinctive roof forms; and**
- **Weather protection over the front walkway.**

Landscaping and Buffering

The Retail Plan provides guidance for landscaping and buffering, including the following:

- Landscape large parking areas with trees and shrubs to reduce the visual impact, provide shade, and reduce the heat absorption;
- Landscape the street frontage with trees to create a green edge;

- Screen parking areas from adjacent streets with heavy landscaping, depressed parking areas, or earthen berms;
- Separate parking lots from sidewalks with green space; and
- Screen ground mounted mechanical equipment (Retail Plan, Design Guidelines, pp. 20-21).

Overall, landscaped edges screen and soften views of the business from roads, enhance the visual quality of the project, provide employees and patrons with open space, and mitigate environmental effects.

The applicant has stated that the project will “satisfy all County landscaping, buffering, and screening requirements, as such may be modified with this application” (Statement of Justification, text, p. 3). The applicant has proposed three modifications to the Zoning Ordinance. These include:

- Allowing play equipment to be located within the required 75-foot rear yard setback (to approximately 35 feet from the rear lot line);
- Reducing the side yard building setback from 75 to 29 feet and the parking setback from 60 to 15 feet; and
- Reducing a portion of the side yard buffer from 20 feet to 15 feet (Statement of Justification, text, p. 7).

The site measures approximately 215 feet wide by 450 feet deep. Staff notes that even with a play area setback reduction, the nearest residential yards would be approximately 80 feet from the play area, due to the adjacent open space area owned by the Ashbrook Village HOA. The open space to the east of the site would also result in a distance of approximately 75 feet between the proposed building and the nearest residential lot line. Likewise, the majority of the parking would be greater than 60 feet from adjacent residential lots and public roads, with the exception of the parking adjacent to the intersection of Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive.

While these modifications may allow some separation between uses, the visual impact of the proposed uses is unclear, largely due to a lack of information regarding the proposed ground elevations of the proposed uses. The Finished Floor Elevations (FFE) of the surrounding 2-story residences range from approximately 260 feet Mean Sea Level (MSL) to 268 feet. It is unclear how these residential elevations relate to the proposed uses. Site elevations would help determine the visual impact of the proposed uses from the surrounding areas.

Additionally, while the required buffer plantings are described for setback areas, no landscaping is depicted within the parking areas. A general depiction of trees, shrubs, grasses, perennials, depressed parking areas, and berms throughout the site would help determine whether the landscaping and buffering is adequate to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses, to justify the reduction in setbacks, and to assess the visual impact of the project.

Given the extent of the proposed use, the requested modifications, and the proximity of residential uses, additional details are needed to determine whether the use is compatible with the surrounding residences. Staff recommends that the applicant commit to a landscape plan and provide grading and planting information, as described above, with special attention to the project's visual impact. Elevations and plantings should be planned so that parking is screened and views of the use are softened from the residences.

Stormwater Management

The project's proposed impervious surfaces, including parking lots and rooftops, are anticipated sources of runoff and pollutants, such as litter, road salts, oil, grease, and heavy metals, which impact water quality (Revised General Plan, text, p. 5-12). The proposed grass and landscape areas can also be expected to have substances, such as fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, applied to them each year. Increased storm runoff volumes and velocities are also expected, which could scour adjacent drainageways, impact wetland resources, and impact adjacent properties.

To protect water resources and the integrity of neighboring properties, the Retail Plan calls for the incorporation of drainage and stormwater management facilities into the project site design (Retail Plan, Design Guidelines, p. 20). The Revised General Plan also calls for low impact development (LID) techniques, which integrate hydrologically functional designs with methods for preventing pollution (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-17). LID approaches seek to control runoff discharge, volume, frequency, and quality in order to mimic predevelopment runoff conditions through a variety of small-scale site design techniques. LID techniques can help reduce sedimentation and erosion, trap and remove pollutants such as nitrogen, phosphorus, metals, and organic compounds, protect wildlife habitat, store flood waters, and maintain the overall water quality of nearby streams. These facilities should be located as close as possible to impervious areas and utilize the landscape and soils to naturally move, store, and filter run-off. The associated flow reductions and water quality improvements can then benefit the receiving streams. LID techniques include:

- Permeable paving;
- Porous concrete;
- Native landscaping enhanced through the routing of runoff through these areas;
- Rain gardens;
- Native-vegetated drainage swales for the movement and temporary storage of runoff;
- Vegetated filter strips that can slow runoff speed, trap sediment and pollutants, and provide additional water absorption;
- The collection and use of rooftop runoff for irrigation; and
- Green roofs.

The applicant has not provided design information regarding water quality and quantity controls. The proposal appears to rely upon a traditional curb and gutter system to relay stormwater runoff directly to the nearby water channel without on-site treatment.

Staff notes that the previous approval for SPEX 2005-0007 included a commitment to pervious parking for all perimeter parking and on-site water quality treatment.

Staff recommends that the applicant consider employing LID facilities on-site. Staff recommends water treatment measures that mimic the pre-development conditions of the site, mitigate impacts to the watershed, and treat the stormwater runoff as an amenity. The applicant should consider various site measures, such as permeable pavers, porous concrete, cisterns, planted swales, curb cuts, rain gardens, and bioretention filters adjacent to impervious areas, to promote infiltration on-site, minimize peak storm flows, and help filter non-point source pollutants. Pipe installation should be minimized.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Circulation

All land development applications are to provide bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access linkages to the County Bicycle and Pedestrian Network (BPMMP, Policy 5, p. 33). Bicycle facilities will be designed in accordance with nationally accepted design guidelines established by organizations such as American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) (BPMMP, text, p. 6).

Russell Branch Parkway is a Baseline Connecting Roadway for the County Bicycle and Pedestrian Network (BPMMP, East Loudoun County Network Map). Baseline Connecting Roadways are to integrate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations as part of the land development process and are to include shared-use paths. Shared-use paths are to be 10 feet wide and paved (BPMMP, text, p. 42, & Policy 1, p. 46). Other roads, as a minimum, will have sidewalks on both sides, with widths from 5 to 6 feet. Vegetated buffers shall also be provided between roads and sidewalks. Six-foot wide sidewalks will feature 4-foot wide vegetated buffers (BPMMP, Policy 2, p. 31).



Russell Branch Parkway (Sept. 11, 2008)

The property frontage along Navajo Drive features an existing 5-foot wide sidewalk and the frontage along Russell Branch Parkway features a 6-foot wide asphalt trail. The applicant has not proposed pedestrian connections to either facility. Nor has the applicant proposed crosswalks across Russell Branch Parkway to the commercial uses on the north side of Russell Branch Parkway.

Staff recommends that the applicant commit to the installation of pedestrian connections to the existing sidewalk along Navajo Drive, safe crossing facilities across the driveway, and crossing facilities to the commercial area on the north

side of Russell Branch Parkway. All pedestrian facilities, including those within the site, should be depicted on the proposed plat. Staff also recommends that all bicycle and pedestrian facilities be constructed in accordance with County policies, AASHTO, and ADA.

Signs and Lighting

County policies call for appropriate lighting to improve visibility and enhance public safety while precluding unnecessary and intrusive light trespass (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, p. 5-42).

The Retail Plan also provides lighting and sign guidance. Retail Plan guidelines include the following:

- Develop signs as an integral part of the overall center design;
- Select lighting that eliminates glare and light spillover onto adjoining properties; and
- Select lighting fixtures that are attractive and compatible with the retail center (Retail Plan, Design Guidelines, p. 21).

The applicant has stated that site lighting will comply with Section 5-1504 of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance. The application does not specifically address the amount of lighting that is anticipated, the intensity of the lighting, the hours of operation, or sign lighting.

Staff recommends that the applicant commit to a lighting plan and provide assurances that lighting will be fully shielded, provide a glare-free environment, be confined to the site, and turned off after business hours, unless required for security purposes, and that illumination levels will be no greater than necessary for a light's intended purpose. All lighting should be designed to preclude light trespass onto adjoining properties, glare to passersby, skyglow, and deterioration of the nighttime environment.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Green Infrastructure is a collection of natural, cultural, heritage, environmental, protected, passive, and active resources that are integrated into a related system. These resources include wetlands, moderately steep slopes, and vegetated landscapes (Revised General Plan, Policy 1, pp. 5-1 to 5-2). The County uses integrated management strategies for the Green Infrastructure to ensure that all land use planning and development respect and preserve the holistic nature of the elements of the Green Infrastructure (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-2).

The property contains various Green Infrastructure resources including wetlands and hydric soils.

Wetlands

The County supports the federal goal of no net loss to wetlands (Revised General Plan, Policy 23, p. 5-11). In the event of an impact, compensatory mitigation (restoration, creation, enhancement, and preservation) could replace the loss of wetland functions in

the watershed to meet the County's goal of no net loss to the existing acreage and functions of wetlands.



Site Wetlands (Sept. 11, 2008)



Drainage/Wetlands Area (Sept. 11, 2008)

The proposed plat shows impacts to an existing wetlands preservation area. Given the proposed locations of parking, the childcare center, and the play area, along with expected construction staging, site grading, and soil compaction, staff anticipates additional on-site and off-site wetlands impacts. If the project is built as proposed, drainage channels might be eliminated or reconstructed with a narrower cross-section, resulting in stormwater scouring of any remaining wetlands. It is unclear whether any of the wetlands would be saved or how the functionality of the drainage area would be addressed.

Staff recommends that the applicant modify the project so that the functionality of the on-site and off-site wetlands is preserved. The applicant should provide additional information regarding proposed changes to the site hydrology so that any impacts can be evaluated. For any impacts to on-site resources, staff recommends mitigation on-site, within the same watershed, and within Loudoun County.

Efficiency

In implementing its program for achieving and sustaining a Built Environment of high quality, the County will emphasize its role as leader and facilitator, and as a source of information on environmental design options and procedures (Revised General Plan, Policy 2, p. 5-5).

Staff recommends that the applicant consider sustainable design measures that could be incorporated into the project site and building. Staff suggests that the applicant consider committing to the LEED Rating System.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff is not able to recommend approval of the Special Exception request until such time that the issues raised above are addressed.

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Staff is available to meet with the applicant to discuss these issues.

Cc: Julie Pastor, AICP, Planning Director
Cindy Keegan, AICP, Program Manager, Community Planning (via email)

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT
MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 9, 2009
TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager, Department Of Planning
THROUGH: Marilee L. Seigfried, Deputy Zoning Administrator
FROM: John D. Kirby, Planner, Zoning Administration *J.D. Kirby*
CASE NUMBER AND NAME: SPEX-2008-0042, The Compass School
LCTM: /62/L/1/////3/
MCPI: 084-30-9250
PLAN SUBMISSION NUMBER: 2nd Submission

The subject parcel is zoned PD-IP (Planned Development-Industrial Park) under the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. A Day Care use is permitted by special exception.

ZONING COMMENTS:

I. CRITICAL ISSUES:

II. OTHER ISSUES:

- Per Section 5-609(2)(b) a designated pickup and delivery zone, providing at a minimum one (1) parking space per twenty (20) children...is required in addition to the required spaces per 5-1102. The applicant is requesting a Minor Special Exception that incorporates the delivery zone into the required parking per Section 5-1102.
- While Staff does not disagree with the applicant's justification for the reduction, it appears the need for the reduction is due to the increased size of the building. Staff is still not clear why the building size needs to be increased.
- The applicant's justification for requesting a Zoning Modification of Section 5-1414(B) buffer yard identifies the existing vegetation located on the Ashbrook Homeowners Association open space to provide additional screening and buffering between the residential properties and the Compass School. The applicant should provide a detail of the existing vegetation located between the Compass School and the residential properties which are adjacent to the Ashbrook Homeowners Association open space to demonstrate the adequacy of screening.

- Staff recommends replacing all references to “pervious pavement” with “pervious surface” to provide flexibility in the surface type at the time of site plan.

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN
DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT
MEMORANDUM



DATE: October 3, 2008

TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager, Department Of Planning

THROUGH: Marilee L. Seigfried, Deputy Zoning Administrator

FROM: John D. Kirby, Planner, Zoning Administration *J.D. Kirby for M.L.S.*

CASE NUMBER AND NAME: SPEX-2008-0042, The Compass School

LCTM: /62/L/1////3/ & /62/N/2////F/

MCPI: 084-30-9250 & 084-30-7853

PLAN SUBMISSION NUMBER: 1st Submission

The subject parcels are zoned PD-IP (Planned Development-Industrial Park) and PD-H6 (Planned Development-Housing 6) under the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance. A Day Care use is permitted by special exception in both districts.

ZONING COMMENTS:

I. CRITICAL ISSUES:

- A Zoning Modification (ZMOD) application is necessary to process the proposed modifications.

II. OTHER ISSUES:

Special Exception Plat Comments:

- Please address conditions approved with SPEX-2005-0005 in relation to this application.
- Remove the "site access only" notation in the Site Information table on sheet 1 of the special exception plat since parcel 084-30-7853, which provides access, must be included in this application. State the use in the table for this parcel as "open space and access to child care facility."
- Update the General Notes to reference ZMOD-2005-0007 and SPEX-2005-0005.

- Under Parking Tabulations please note that the 10 spaces required for drop off and delivery are in addition to the Section 5-1102 parking requirements as per Section 6-509(B)(2), therefore 82 spaces are required.
- Identify the correct front, side, and rear buffer yards. It is noted that buffers are shown going through the building footprint.
- Sheet 2 indicates an existing drainage easement in the rear of the proposed structure. Address whether the drainage easement will impact the proposed Type 2 buffer.
- Sheet 3. Indicate on "15' Type 2 Buffer Yard" label that this is a modification request.
- Label the areas on Sheet 2 that are the subject of the requested zoning modifications.
- Staff notes that a Special Exception (SPEX-2005-0005) was approved March 21, 2006, and the fact that the project was approved based on the Applicant's willingness to substantially reduce the size of the project from the original request. The Applicant is now requesting a 3,200 square foot increase from the previously approved Special Exception request.

III. SECTION 6-1504 MODIFICATIONS. In accordance with Section 6-1504, no modification shall be approved unless the Board of Supervisors finds that such modification to the regulation will achieve an innovative design, improve upon the existing regulations or otherwise exceed the public purpose of the existing regulation:

A. **Section 5-609(B)(1)(b)** prohibits play equipment within the required yard setback of any district. The applicant proposes a modification to Section 5-609(B)(1)(b) to permit play equipment to be located within the required 75' yard setback of the district.

Staff would like to note that it appears this Zoning Modification request is not needed because Section 4-505(B)(1) states no building, outdoor storage, areas for collection of refuse, or loading area shall be permitted closer than seventy five (75) feet to any agricultural district, any existing or zoned residential district, or land bay allowing residential uses and does not address play equipment.

B. **Section 5-1414(B)** requires Type 2 side and rear buffer yards, which are to be a minimum of 20' feet to a maximum of 30' feet wide. The applicant proposes a modification to reduce the required side yard buffer from 20' to 15' feet wide.

Summary of Applicant's Justification:

1. The modification will allow the applicant to provide parking spaces close to the entrance and away from the proposed play area and surrounding residential uses.
2. The proposed reduced buffer yard will be supplemented by HOA open space.

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3. The planting will remain the same with only the width being reduced.

Staff Analysis:

1. The Statement of Justification indicates that the 15 foot wide buffer is only proposed along the property line shared with Parcel F1. Please clarify that this is the only area proposed for the modification by labeling it as such.
2. Provide additional justification as to how the public purpose is to be exceeded with this modification request.
3. Note that one of the issues for consideration in Section 6-1310 (F) is whether there is sufficient existing or proposed landscaping, screening and buffering on the site and in the neighborhood to adequately screen surrounding uses. Please address whether the proposed buffer will adequately screen surrounding uses.
4. Provide further justification per Section 6-1310(E) whether the proposed use is compatible with other existing or proposed uses in the neighborhood, and adjacent parcels and provide justification per Section 6-1310(C) whether the level and impact of any noise emanating from the site, including that generated by the proposed use, negatively impacts the uses in the immediate area in relationship to reduction of buffer width. If there is an impact, are any improvements proposed to reduce the impacts and exceed the public purpose?

C. **Section 4-505(B)(2)** requires a 75' yard for buildings and a 60' yard for parking adjacent to agricultural and residential districts and land bays allowing residential uses. The applicant proposes a modification to reduce the required side, and rear building yards from 75' feet to 29' feet, and to reduce the parking setback from 60' feet to 15' feet.

Summary of Applicant's Justification:

1. The open space of the Ashbrook Homeowners Association provides an additional setback between the proposed building and neighboring residential properties and minimizes the impact of this proposed modification.
2. The proposed child care facility is not a typical use anticipated in the PD-IP district and the required setback may have been designed with other, more industrial uses in mind.
3. The applicant is seeking to provide parking spaces close to the facility's entrance and Russell Branch Parkway and away from the proposed play area and neighboring residential lots.

Staff Analysis:

1. This modification was previously approved, per ZMOD-2005-0007; however, the layout of the site has been modified so the modification should be restated and confirmed.

A.19

2. The Statement of Justification indicates that the parking yard reduction is only requested on the east and west sides of the lot. Please label on the Special Exception Plat the specific area for which the modification is requested.
3. The Statement of Justification indicates that the building yard reduction is only requested on the eastern side of the lot. Please label on the Special Exception Plat the specific area for which the modification is requested.
4. In relationship to the request to reduce the required building and parking yard setbacks, address the issues of consideration in Section 6-1310(E) as to whether the proposed use is compatible with other existing or proposed uses in the neighborhood, and adjacent parcel and in Section 6-1310(C) as to whether the level and impact of any noise emanating from the site, including that generated by the proposed use, negatively impacts the uses in the immediate area in relationship to the reduction of require building, and parking yard setbacks. If there is an impact, are any improvements proposed to reduce the impacts and exceed the public purpose?
5. Staff notes that a Special Exception (SPEX-2005-0005) was approved March 21, 2006, and the fact that the project was approved based on the Applicant's willingness to substantially reduce the size of the project from the original request. The Applicant is now requesting a 3,200 square foot increase from the previously approved Special Exception request.
6. Address the issue of consideration of Section 6-1310(F) as to whether there is sufficient existing or proposed landscaping, screening and buffering on the site and in the neighborhood to adequately screen surrounding uses from reduced building and parking yard setbacks.

DEPARTMENT OF BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

COUNTY OF LOUDOUN

MEMORANDUM



DATE: September 12, 2008

TO: J.D. Kirby, Zoning Planner

FROM: Todd Taylor, Environmental Engineer *TD*

THROUGH: William Marsh, Environmental Review Team Leader *WM*

CC: Joe Gorney, Community Planner

SUBJECT: **SPEX-2008-0042**
Compass School - Ashbrook

The Environmental Review Team (ERT) reviewed the subject application and provides the following comments:

Regarding wetlands

1. Note 6 on Sheet 1 references approved wetland permit WP4-07-0612. Please provide a copy of the permit for staff to review. The note states that wetland impacts are compensated with mitigation credits from the Cedar Run Wetlands Bank. The referenced bank is located in Prince William County and therefore is inconsistent with Policy 23 on Page 5-11 of the Revised General Plan (RGP), which states that "the County will support the federal goal of no net loss to wetlands in the County." Furthermore, the County's strategy is to protect its existing green infrastructure elements and to recapture elements where possible [RGP, Page 6-8, Green Infrastructure Text].
2. Based on the size of the parcel and existing wetlands, staff recommends that the applicant consider reducing the size of the facility and associated parking and/or reducing the footprint by constructing a two-story building. Staff does not support the proposed modifications to allow the building and parking to be located closer to the existing wetland area along the eastern boundary of the property, resulting in impacts. Staff recommends perseveration of this jurisdictional feature. It is noted that the existing wetland area was designated for preservation as part of an earlier permit issued for the Ashbrook community (VWP 00-B0920). Not only is this area now being impacted, the compensation has been approved outside of the County, as described above.

Regarding water quality

3. Pursuant to Section 6-1310(H) of the Revised 1993 Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance, the applicant must address whether the proposed special exception will impact water quality. Please provide information describing the stormwater management (SWM)/best management practice (BMP) approach for the proposed project. The previously approved special exception (SPEX-2005-0005) included onsite water quality treatment.

Regarding Green Building Practices

4. Staff encourages a commitment in the design of the proposed childcare center to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, as supported by the United States Green Building Council. With the second submittal, please include a LEED for New Construction or Core and Shell score sheet to indicate design commitments to site sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, indoor air quality, efficient materials and resources use, and innovative design.


LEED recognizes site sustainability, conservation of energy and water, and indoor air quality, among other goals. The RGP also encourages these goals in the General Water Policies supporting long-term water conservation (Policy 1, Page 2-20); the Solid Waste Management Policies supporting waste reduction, reuse, and recycling (Policy 2, Page 2-23); and the Air Quality Policies supporting the creation of pedestrian and bicycle facilities (Policy 1, Page 5-41). Furthermore, as of April 15, 2008, the Board of Supervisors also endorsed LEED as the preferred green building rating system for commercial construction and recommended the "COG Regional Green Standard" for private development, as described on pages 11-12 of "Greening the Washington Metropolitan Region's Built Environment", available at <http://www.mwcog.org/environment/greenbuilding/>.

Due to the scope of the comments provided, staff requests an opportunity to review the subsequent submission of this application. Please contact me if you need any additional information.

County of Loudoun
Office of Transportation Services
MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 22, 2008

TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager, Department of Planning

FROM: Art Smith, Senior Coordinator 

SUBJECT: **SPEX 2008-0042 & ZMOD 2008-0015**
The Compass School
Second Referral

In its initial referral on this application OTS noted:

Transportation related conditions in this application should be the same as the currently approved SPEX. This includes the location of the site entrance on Navajo Drive. This entrance location was a major issue in the consideration of the current SPEX. Assuming the site's entrance location is acceptable, there would be no transportation issues which would preclude approval of this application.

Status: OTS examined the location of the entrance as shown on STPL 2006-0065 (Patriot Learning Center) and SPEX 2005-0005 (Busy Kids). The entrance location for this application is the same as shown on the previous two applications. This issue is resolved.

Please note the applicant should also address VDOT's comment number 1 which pertains to improvements to Navajo Drive between the site entrance and Russell Branch Parkway including a sidewalk and curb ramps.

OTS also reviewed an October 10, 2008 letter from Gorove/Slade Associates responding to VDOT comments dated September 9, 2008. We agree with the consultant's conclusion that there is no need for right or left turn lanes. We also agree with the results of the queuing analysis with respect to entrance location.

OTS further reviewed the consultant memo of November 6, 2008 which was an on-site parking reduction study in support for a reduction of 82 spaces to 73 spaces. We would appreciate receiving the B&D Zoning response to this memo.


CONCLUSION

Subject to the B&D Zoning determination of adequate on-site parking and the applicant adequately addressing VDOT's comment number 1 in their December 16, 2008 referral, OTS would not object to the approval of this application.

AJS/Ilm

cc: Andy Beacher, Assistant Director/Highway Division Chief

County of Loudoun
Office of Transportation Services
MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 30, 2008
TO: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager, Department of Planning
FROM: Art Smith, Senior Coordinator, Planning and Development 
**SUBJECT: SPEX 2008-0042 Compass School – Ashburn
First Referral**

This special exception (SPEX) seeks to amend the footprint of the child care center approved in SPEX 2005-0005/ZMOD 2005-0007. The currently approved SPEX has approved conditions. The subject site covers approximately 2.19 acres and is located south of Russell Branch Parkway and east of Navajo Drive. Please see Attachment 1, Site Location Map. In its consideration of this application, OTS reviewed a Statement of Justification dated August 8, 2008 and a traffic study dated June 24, 2008 prepared by Gorove/Slade Associates.

SPEX 2005-0005 was approved by the Board of Supervisors in March 2006 and allowed a 9,960 square foot facility with associated play area and parking spaces. This facility has not been implemented. The proposed new child care center would have a size increase to 13,168 square feet. Estimated project completion date is 2010. The center would be accessed by one full access site entrance on Navajo Drive.

Existing, Planned and Programmed Transportation Facilities

Russell Branch Parkway is currently a four-lane median divided, controlled access major collector road in the vicinity of the site. Right-of-way is 120 feet. The July 2001 Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) specifies Russell Branch Parkway to ultimately be widened to a six lane road. The posted speed limit on Russell Branch Parkway in the vicinity of the application site is 35 mph. There are currently no public or private funds allocated to the widening of existing Russell Branch Parkway.

Navajo Drive is an existing local suburban street, 32 feet paved curb to curb section in a 50 foot right-of-way. This is its planned ultimate section. Its intersection with Russell Branch Parkway currently operates under stop sign control.

There is an existing sidewalk on the site's frontage with Navajo Drive. There is an existing trail on the site's frontage with Russell Branch Parkway.

The Ashburn Village Connector local transit route serves the site with a stop at the Ashburn Commons Shopping Center.

Existing and Forecasted Traffic Volumes and Service Levels

Existing (2008) lane configurations, peak hour traffic volumes and levels of service (LOS) are shown on Attachment 2. Proximate intersections operate at acceptable peak hour LOS.

The traffic consultant forecasts 1,026 daily weekday vehicle trips will be generated by the proposed development including 121 vehicle trips in the AM peak hour and 70 vehicle trips in the PM peak hour. Please note the consultant used ITE Code 565, Day Care Center, for trip generation. OTS views this as the appropriate trip code. In addition, the amount of square footage was used as the trip generation variable unit. VDOT has previously endorsed this approach.

Forecasted total traffic volumes for buildout year 2010 are shown in Attachment 3. Forecasted LOS for the same year is shown in Attachment 4. LOS for all key movements including the site's entrance on Navajo Drive is forecasted to be acceptable.

Transportation Comments

Transportation related conditions for this application should be the same as for the currently approved SPEX. This includes the location of the site entrance on Navajo Drive. This entrance location was a major issue in the consideration of the current SPEX.

Conclusion

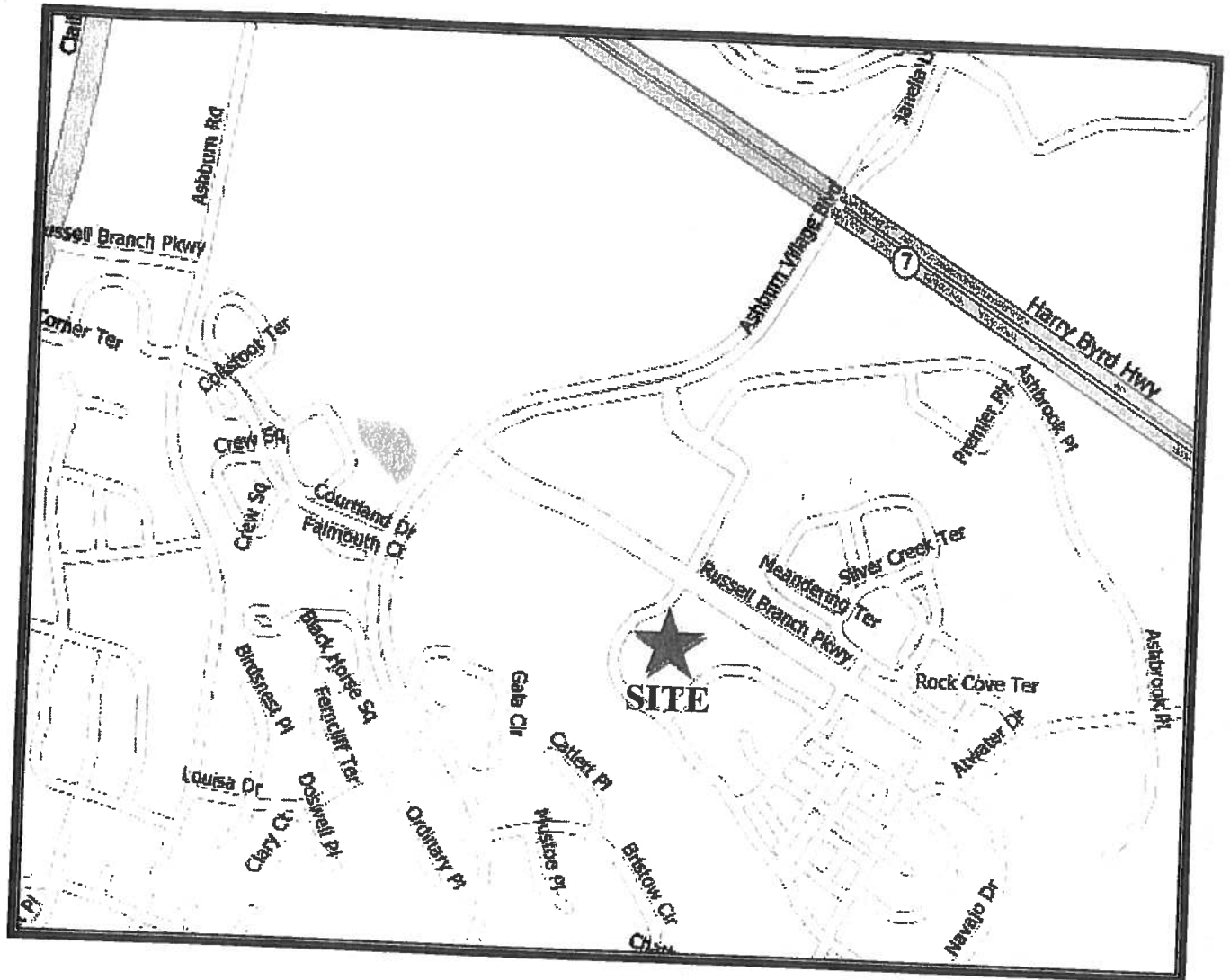
Assuming the site's entrance location is acceptable, there would be no transportation issues which would preclude approval of this application.

cc: Andy Beacher, Assistant Director

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Figure 1: Regional Map and Site Location



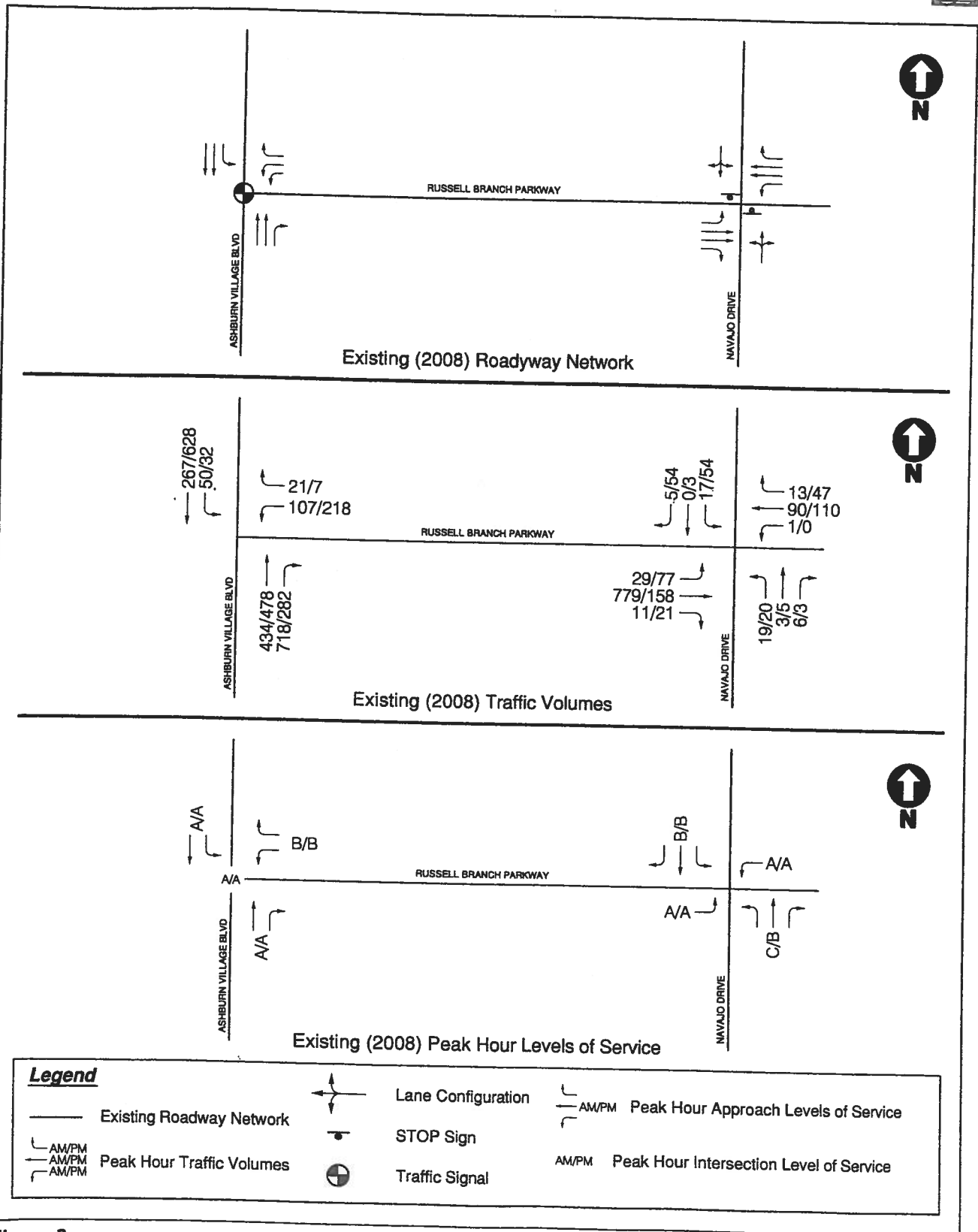


Figure 3
Existing Conditions (2008)

June 24, 2008

Attachment 2

A-28⁸

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DATE LAST MODIFIED:

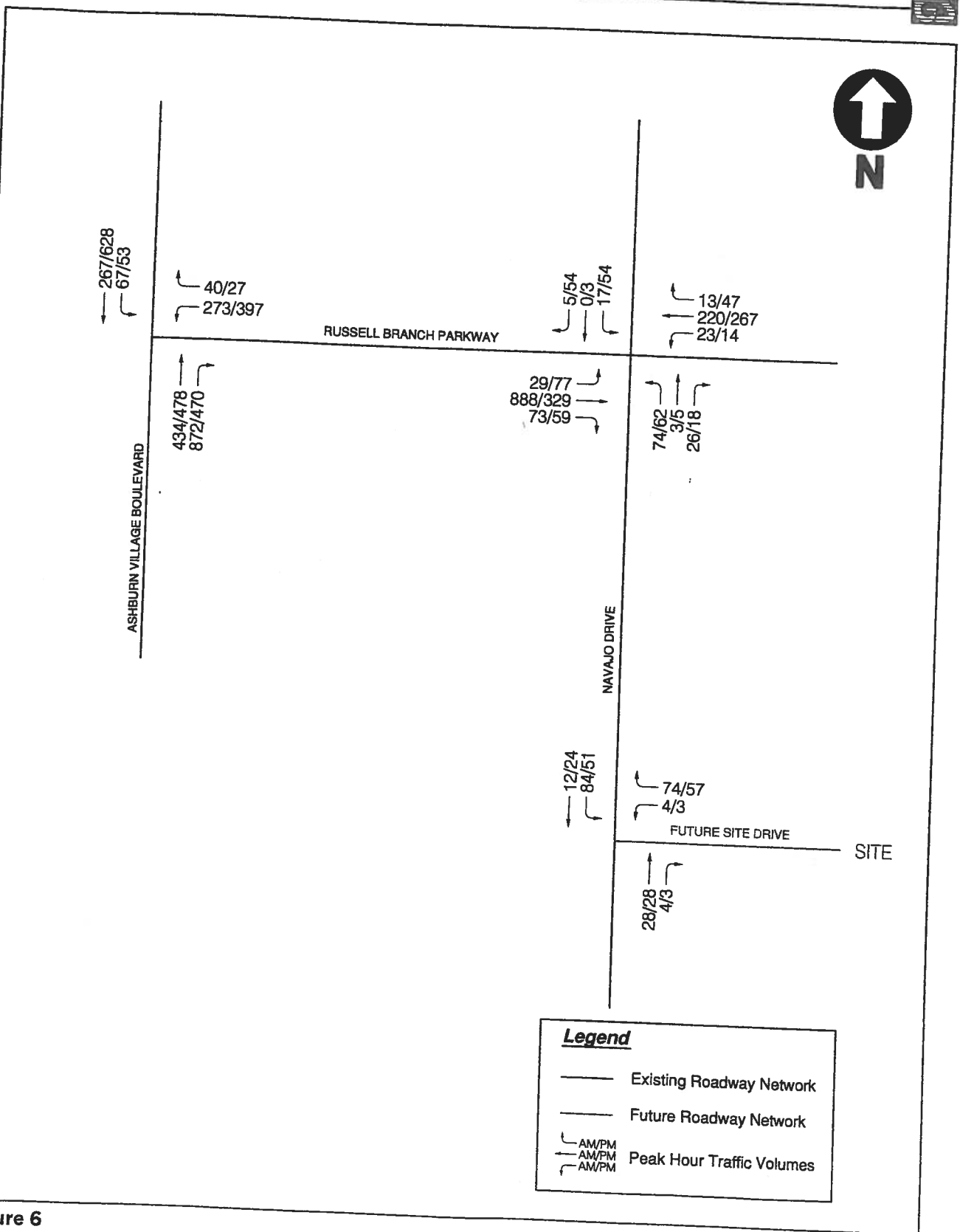


Figure 6
Future With Development (2010) Traffic Volumes

June 24, 2008

Attachment 3

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Future with Development (2010) Capacity Analysis and Results

Capacity analyses were performed at the existing, and proposed intersections contained within the study area during the morning and afternoon peak hours under the future with development 2010 traffic conditions. The critical gap calculated by the HCM/Synchro methodology is excessive for stop-controlled intersections. Spot checks from other projects, suggest that if the gap criteria for the stop-controlled minor street are reduced by 25% from the defaults assigned by Synchro, the delay results will approximate field conditions. To be conservative, a 10% reduction was applied to the critical gap for the minor street approaches at unsignalized intersection.

The results of the intersection capacity analyses under future conditions with development (2010) are presented in **Table 5**, and are expressed in terms of level of service (LOS) and delay (seconds per vehicle). The detailed analysis worksheets are contained in the Technical Appendix.

Table 5: Total Future (2010) Intersection Capacity Analysis

Intersection (Approach/Movement)	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay
Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive				
Overall (Unsignalized)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eastbound (Left)	A	7.8	A	8.2
Westbound (Left)	B	10.2	A	8.2
Northbound	D	31.0	C	18.9
Southbound	C	15.9	B	14.7
Russell Branch Parkway and Ashburn Village Boulevard				
Overall (Signalized)	B	10.4	B	10.1
Westbound (Left)	B	15.3	B	14.8
Northbound	B	11.0	B	11.3
Southbound	A	4.0	A	5.8
Navajo Drive and Site Entrance				
Overall (Unsignalized)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Northbound	A	8.8	A	8.7
Southbound (Left)	A	6.5	A	5.1

N/A: Not Applicable

As mentioned before, it is desirable to achieve a minimum overall and per approach LOS D at each intersection. As shown on Table 5, the study intersections, including the site entrance, operate at acceptable levels of service under the future with development 2010 conditions. **Figure 7** illustrates graphically the intersection capacity analysis results.

Turn Lane Warrant Analysis

Per County's request, turn lane warrant analysis was conducted at the site entrance along Navajo Drive. The analysis revealed that a right turn or left turn lane is not warranted. The turn lane warrant spreadsheets are attached in the appendix section of the report.



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DAVID S. EKERN, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

14685 Avion Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
(703) 383-VDOT (8368)

December 16, 2008



Mr. Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
County of Loudoun
Department of Planning MSC#62
1 Harrison Street, S.E.
P.O. Box 7000
Leesburg, Virginia 20177-7000

Re: Ashbrook - Compass School (Formerly Patriot Learning Center)
Loudoun County Application Number: SPEX 2008-0042

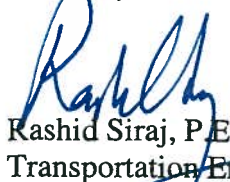
Dear Mr. Gardner:

We have reviewed the above application as requested and offer the following comments:

1. Our previous Comment 1 has not been satisfactorily addressed. Even though the width of the right-of-way is consistent with the previous applications the road width is not. The typical section/configuration of Navajo Drive was discussed and agreed upon with other VDOT agencies previously and therefore should be implemented accordingly
2. Our previous Comment 2 has not been satisfactorily addressed. Why is the AM peak hour volume so low? Will this facility be not operating during this peak hour?
3. What is the reason for keeping the existing road reservation? What is this reservation for?

If you have any questions, please call me at (703) 383-2046.

Sincerely,


Rashid Siraj, P.E.
Transportation Engineer

(Com-2.12-16-08)

ATTACHMENT 1e

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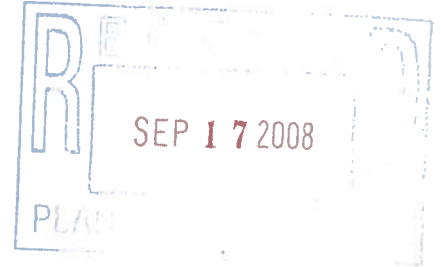
COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DAVID S. EKERN, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

14685 Avion Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
(703) 383-VDOT (8368)

September 9, 2008



Mr. Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
County of Loudoun
Department of Planning MSC#62
1 Harrison Street, S.E.
P.O. Box 7000
Leesburg, Virginia 20177-7000

Re: Ashbrook - Compass School (Formerly Patriot Learning Center)
Loudoun County Application Number: SPEX 2008-0042

Dear Mr. Gardner:

We have reviewed the above application as requested and offer the following comments:

1. This application had been reviewed under different names, i.e. Busy Kids (SPEX 2005-0005/ZMOD 2005-0007) and Patriot Learning Center (STPL 2006-0065); and should comply with all comments offered previously. This includes widening of existing Navajo Drive, provisions for 5' sidewalk and curb-ramps at the proposed entrance. The applicant should refer back to all the previous plans and ensure that the proposed frontage improvements are reflected on this application also.
2. The projected traffic volume (ADT) for existing Russell Branch Parkway and Navajo Drive should be shown on the plan. It appears that turning lanes (right and left) may be warranted at the proposed entrance.
3. It also appears that the entrance is located too close to the intersection and should be moved as far back as possible to ensure adequate queuing entering the facility from Russell Branch Parkway during AM peak hours.

If you have any questions, please call me at (703) 383-2046.

Sincerely,

Rashid Siraj, P.E.
Transportation Engineer

(Com.09-09-08)

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Loudoun County, Virginia
Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management

803 Sycolin Road, Suite 104 Leesburg, VA 20175
Phone 703-777-0333 Fax 703-771-5359



Memorandum

To: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
From: Maria Figueroa Taylor, Fire-Rescue Planner
Date: December 17, 2008
Subject: Compass School – Ashbrook, second referral
SPEX 2008-0042 & ZMOD 2008-0015



Thank you for the opportunity to review the Applicant's response to referral comments dated September 10, 2008. The Fire and Rescue Planning Staff has no further comments.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 703-777-0333.

c: Project file

Teamwork *

ATTACHMENT 1f

m * Service

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LOUDOUN COUNTY, VIRGINIA
Department of Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management
803 Sycolin Road, Suite 104 Leesburg, VA 20175
Phone 703-777-0333 Fax 703-771-5359



Memorandum

To: Stephen Gardner, Project Manager
From: Maria Figueroa Taylor, Fire-Rescue Planner
Date: September 10, 2008
Subject: Compass School -- Ashbrook
SPEX 2008-0042



Thank you for the opportunity to review the above captioned application to amend the footprint of the child care center approved in SPEX 2005-0005. The Fire and Rescue Planning Staff, in agreement with the Fire Marshal's Office, has no objection to the application as presented.

The Fire-Rescue GIS and Mapping coordinator offered the following information regarding estimated response times:

PIN	Project name	Ashburn VFRC Station 6 Travel Time
084-30-9250	Compass School	3 minutes, 30 seconds

The Travel Times for each project were calculated using ArcGIS and Network Analyst extension to calculate the travel time in minutes. To get the total response time another two minutes were added to account for dispatching and turnout. This assumes that the station is staffed at the time of the call. If the station is unoccupied another one to three minutes should be added.

Project name	Ashburn VFRC Station 6 Approximate Response Times
Compass School	5 minutes, 30 seconds

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 703-777-0333.

c: Project file

*Teamwork * Integrity * Professionalism * Service*

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September 12, 2008



Mr. Stephen Gardner
Department of Planning
1 Harrison Street, S.E.
P.O. Box 7000
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

Re: SPEX – 2008-0042; Compass School-Ashbrook

Dear Mr. Gardner:

Loudoun Water has reviewed the referenced Special Exception application and offers no objection to its approval.

Should offsite easements be required to extend public water and/or sanitary sewer to this site, the applicant shall be responsible for acquiring such easements and dedicating them to the Authority at no cost to the County or to the Authority. Public water and sanitary sewer service would be contingent upon the developer's compliance with the Authority's Statement of Policy; Rate, Rules and Regulations; and Design Standards.

Should you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Julie Atwell
Engineering Administrative Specialist



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